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ABSTRACT

The Division of High Schools Public Law 100.297 Instructional Support program serves eligible students, ages 12-21, who have entered New York City public schools after attending state-operated or state-supported settings and who are encountering difficulties adjusting to the high school special education environment. In 1992-93 the program served 317 eligible students from 78 schools. The program provided support for these students to improve reading and communication skills, based on direct training in the use of electronic instructional equipment and materials, specifically the Franklin Speaking Dictionary Companion and the Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia. In addition, a small sample of students was given the NYNEX Visionphone. The devices were given to the students on a home-loan basis in order to help them with skills in communication and the use of reference materials. Teacher coaches trained and supported students and maintained regular contact with parents. Another program component, Arts in Education, provided schools with resident actors who employed various hands-on experiences that were integrated into subject content and adapted to meet the students' individual social, academic, and cultural needs. Performance of 126 students on a pretest/posttest indicated that 95 percent demonstrated improvement. Recommendations are offered for program administration. An appendix provides an evaluation summary concerning ENACT, one of the program's theater activities. (JDD)

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OREA Report

DIVISION OF HIGH SCHOOLS
PUBLIC LAW 100.297 (FORMERLY 89-313)
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM
OREA EVALUATION REPORT
1992-93

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DIVISION OF HIGH SCHOOLS
PUBLIC LAW 100.297 (FORMERLY 89-313)
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM
OREA EVALUATION REPORT
1992-93

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SUMMARY

The Division of High Schools Public Law 100.297 (formerly P.L. 89-313) Instructional Support program served eligible student ages 12-21 in MIS I and II programs who have entered New York City public high schools from institutional settings. Eligible students had been enrolled in state-operated or state-supported settings for at least one year prior to being transferred to a New York City public school and were encountering difficulties adjusting to the high school special education environment. The P.L. 100.297 program provided additional support for these students. The program's goal was to improve student reading and communication skills based on direct training in the use of electronic instructional equipment and materials.

In 1992-93 the program served approximately 317 eligible students from 78 schools. Included were students who had a similar history and needs as the target population. The program was staffed by one program director, a teacher coordinator, and six per-session teacher coaches. The main objective of the program was to improve student achievement through training on the use of two computerized instructional aids: the Franklin Speaking Dictionary Companion and the Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia. In addition, a small sample of students was given the NYNEX Visionphone. The devices were given to the students on a home-loan basis in order to help them with communication skills and the use of reference materials. Teacher coaches were responsible for training and ongoing support of students in school and maintained regular contact and meetings with parents. In addition, the program held a full-day student/parent conference conducted by Franklin Electronic Publishers Inc. that was attended by 59 students and 54 parents, and a training session at the NYNEX Center for 20 students and 10 parents for training on the Visionphone.

An alternative program, Arts in Education, was provided for students who could not attend the full-day conference, as well as for other students as funding and programming permitted. Cultural and educational services were contracted and provided instructional activities in the performing arts.

OREA found that the program was fully implemented as planned and was successful in meeting most of the implementation and outcome objectives. Staff training on the devices and on how to support the parent/student teams was appropriate, and teacher coaches and the teacher coordinator provided the intended services to students and parents during the program year.

Students took the Brigance pretest in Reference/ Communications Skills at the time they received their devices, and then a posttest in the late spring. Of the 126 students who took both the pre- and posttest, 95 percent demonstrated improvement. This fell slightly short of the program's goal that 100 percent of the program participants would demonstrate one year of growth.

Based on the findings of the evaluation, OREA recommends that program administrators:

- make Franklin device training more accessible to students through additional after-school training sessions for the students and additional workshops for the student/parent teams;
- expand the Arts in Education program to serve more students with histories and needs similar to those of the target population, as time and finances permit, and
- hire additional teacher coaches to permit more frequent communications with student/parent teams, as well as an expansion of the served population.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Public Law 100.297 (formerly 89-313) Instructional Support program is a federally-funded program designed to supplement local and state efforts to provide education to eligible children with particular handicapping conditions who have entered New York City public high schools from institutional settings. Eligible students* are those who have been enrolled in state-operated or state-supported settings for at least one year prior to being transferred to a New York City public school and who may be encountering difficulties adjusting to a high school's special education classroom environment as a result of their experience in highly structured state-supported settings. The organization of the high school curriculum and schedule provides limited opportunities for high school special education students to receive supplementary support. The P.L. 100.297 program provides the additional support these students need.

The objective of the 1992-93 High School 100.297 program was to improve student achievement based on direct training in the use of instructional equipment and materials. Participating students received direct support through training in the use of two computerized instructional aids: the electronic Franklin Speaking Dictionary, and the Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia.

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*Although the program was funded by P.L. 100.297 this year, the criteria for inclusion in the program continued to be those used under P.L. 89-313, and staff members continued to use this terminology in referring to the students; this terminology has therefore been maintained in the text of this report.

In addition, a small sample of students received NYNEX Visionphones. The devices were given to the students on a home-loan basis to help them with communication skills and the use of reference materials.

During 1992-93 the program's stated measure of student success was that 100 percent of eligible P.L. 100.297 students provided with supplementary direct instructional materials and equipment would show a minimum of one grade level growth as measured by the Brigance pre- and posttests in Reference/ Communication Skills.

STAFFING

The program was staffed by one program director, a teacher coordinator, and six per-session teacher coaches. The teacher coaches supported students in the use of the home loan devices and also provided tutorial sessions to prepare students for the Regents Competency Tests (R.C.T.'s).

Eligible students who could not be served in the home loan device component were served by a supplemental Arts In Education program component which consisted of three separate drama programs: Theatre For A New Audience, which served 12 schools; Young Audiences, which served one school; and ENACT, which served two schools. Each program provided schools with resident actors who employed various hands-on experiences that were integrated into subject class content and were adapted to meet the individual social, academic, and cultural needs of both students and staff. These programs included parent involvement activities and performances open to the public.

PARTICIPANTS

During the 1992-93 program year the eligible target population included 317 program eligible students and additional students between the ages of 14 and 21 who were classified SIS I, MIS I, MIS II, Visually Impaired, or Gifted. The additional students were not certified as eligible for the program, but their handicapping conditions and recent educational history made them appropriate candidates for service, whenever staff time permitted.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The OREA evaluation of the High School P.L. 100.297 program included an observation of a full-day conference providing training in the use of the educational devices; surveys of teacher coaches, selected parents, and students at the full-day conference; a review of teacher coach contact logs; and interviews with the teacher coordinator and the program staff. Quantitative outcomes data was provided by program staff.

Evaluation questions included:

- Did the program meet the teacher coach training objectives?
- Did the program meet the parent support objectives?
- Did the program meet the student training objectives?
- Did the students in the home loan device component meet the objective of a one grade level increase for 100 percent of the participants on the Brigance pre- and posttest?

SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

Chapter II of this report covers the implementation aspect of the program evaluation, Chapter III examines program outcomes, and Chapter IV offers OREA's conclusions and recommendations.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

STAFFING AND PARTICIPATION

Six teacher coaches and a teacher coordinator provided the intended services to 317 program eligible students and other students coming from a total of 78 sites in all five boroughs. Placement of program participants with coaches was based on historical prerogatives (teacher coaches had the students previously), and proximity of the student to the teachers coach's home school assignment. All the proposed targeted population was served, either with a Franklin device (85 students received Dictionaries, 41 students received Encyclopedias, 20 students received NYNEX Visionphones), or with one of the three supplemental Arts in Education programs (ENACT, Theatre for a New Audience, or Young Audiences). When vacancies and time permitted, each school's Assistant Principal for Special Education (APSE) reviewed student records to identify "89-313-like" students as additional Arts program participants.

During the 1992-93 academic year students received service directly from the teacher coaches in several ways: on-going training on the Franklin devices in partnership with a parent, guardian, or other adult family member (called a "Learning Team"), which included weekly "non-notification"* contacts with the teams (teacher coaches were required to keep a phone contact

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* A non-notification phone contact is defined as a contact that is not made for the purpose of making appointments or other administrative details, but rather as part of the ongoing instructional process.

log to document these contacts--See Table 1) and technical support; after-school tutoring held in the teacher coach's assigned school to assist the program students in preparation for the Regents Competency Tests (R.C.T.'s), frequently with the assistance of veteran program participants (31 of them) who served as student mentors for the newer program students by assisting them in the use of the Franklin Dictionary; and help from one coach who worked with twenty students and ten parents in a partnership training program using the NYNEX Visionphone, also assisted by student mentors.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Full-Day Conference

The full-day conference was held in March of 1993, and was attended by 54 parents, 59 students, and one Franklin staff person. Teacher coaches, students, and parents received training on the Franklin Speaking Dictionary and the Columbia Encyclopedia, and all students received a device for home-loan.

Teacher coaches rated the training session's helpfulness in teaching them about the Dictionary or Encyclopedia highly (5 or 6 on a Likert scale, with 1 being "not helpful" and 6 being "very helpful"--See Table 2).

After the conference, parents gave their ability to help their child with the device a mean rating of as 5.1 (using a Likert scale of 1 representing "not able" and 6 representing "very able"--See table 3).

TABLE 1

TEACHER COACH CONTACTS WITH LEARNING TEAMS, 1992-93

Teacher Coach	# Learning Teams[a]	# Contacts[b]
A	56	378
B	36	799
C	16	189
D	26	157
E	24	214
F	36	1045
TOTALS	194	2782

[a]A Learning Team consists of a program student plus a parent, guardian, or other adult relative.

[b]A contact consists of a home phone call, after-school tutoring session, special activity (e.g. conference), Visionphone contact, or personal classroom contact.

TABLE 2

MARCH 1993 TEACHER COACH RESPONSES
TO FULL-DAY CONFERENCE
(N = 6)

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
Which Franklin device were you trained on?	3 were trained on Dictionary only. 3 were trained on both the Dictionary and the Encyclopedia.
Were you trained by a Franklin Computer representative?	All 6 said that they were.
How many training sessions did you attend?	2 said they had 1 session. 2 said they had 2 sessions. 2 said they had 4 sessions.
How many hours of training did you receive?	1 said they had 1 hour. 1 said they had 3 hours. 1 said they had 4 hours. 2 said they had 8 hours.
How helpful was the training for teaching you to use the Dictionary or Encyclopedia?*	4 teacher coaches rated the training "5". 2 teacher coaches rated the training "6".
How helpful was the training in teaching you how to teach students and parents how to use the Dictionary or Encyclopedia?*	1 teacher coach rated the training "4". 4 teacher coaches rated the training "6". 1 teacher coach said that the question was "not applicable".
Do you know who to contact if you have questions about the Dictionary or Encyclopedia?	All 6 teacher coaches answered "yes".
Do you have any suggestions that could help you to teach students and parents about how to use the Dictionary or Encyclopedia?	Would like training on the Encyclopedia. (2) Would like a teachers' manual on the devices. (1) Would like another workshop. (1) The devices are good for ESL students and for parent interaction. (1)

*Using a Likert scale of 1 "Not Helpful" to 6 "Very Helpful".

TABLE 3

MARCH 1993 PARENTS' RESPONSES TO FULL-DAY CONFERENCE
(N=38)

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES	
How did you learn about the conference?[a]	From Division of H.S. From teacher coach My child told me Received invitation	84% 31% 31% 18%
Which Franklin device were you trained on?	Dictionary Encyclopedia	51% 49%
How able are you to help your child use this device?[b]	Mean=	5.1
Do you know who to contact if you have questions about the devices?	Yes	82%

[a]Multiple responses are possible.
[b]Using a Likert scale of 1 "Not Able" to 6 "Very Able".

Students surveyed at the end of the conference indicated that the training was useful (a mean of 4.9 on a 6 point scale) and the device was enjoyable (a mean of 5.8 on a 6 point scale--See Table 4). About 89 percent of all three groups attending the conference said that they had access to assistance with the device.

In addition to the full-day conference, a total of 10 parents and 20 students were trained on the use of the NYNEX Visionphone at the NYNEX Center.

Arts in Education

The Arts in Education program provided enrichment in the area of dramatic arts for program students and other non-certified but similar students at a total of 15 high schools. Participants included some students who were unable to attend the full-day conference, as well as others who did attend the conference. The programs offered during the 1992-93 program year included Theatre for a New Audience (located at 12 schools), Young Audiences (located at 1 school), and ENACT (located at 2 sites). The ENACT component, which was the only Arts program evaluated by OREA this year, is described in the Appendix. In general, the Arts in Education program objectives were met during the program year.

After-School Workshops

After-school workshops were held throughout the program year for students in the home loan device component. The Franklin devices were utilized for the purpose of preparing students for the R.C.T.'s, and student mentors assisted the students whenever

TABLE 4

MARCH 1993 STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO FULL-DAY CONFERENCE
(N=52)

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
Which device did you receive?	Dictionary 39% Encyclopedia 61%
Have you ever used something like this before?	Yes 60%
How much did you learn about using the Dictionary or Encyclopedia?[a]	Mean= 4.9
How much do you like the Dictionary or Encyclopedia?[b]	Mean= 5.8
Do you know who to call if you have questions about you Dictionary or Encyclopedia?	Yes 86%
How much did you enjoy using the equipment today?[b]	Mean= 5.5

[a]Using a Likert scale of 1 "Nothing" to 6 "A Lot".
[b]Using a Likert scale of 1 "Not At All" to 6 "Very Much".

possible. Study skills were addressed, as well as other issues faced by high school students.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Each of the program activities--the full-day conference, the NYNEX Visionphone training session, the teacher coach telephone contacts, and the Arts in Education program--was conducted with the explicit objective of promoting parent involvement. The invitation to attend the full-day conference was extended to both students and parents, as was the case with the NYNEX training, and the parents and students were subsequently treated as teams at these meetings.

The teacher coach telephone contacts, while primarily oriented toward curricular support for students, were guided by an interchange between the teacher coach and the student/parent teams. Parent input and involvement were significant components of the program.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

In addition to the conference, staff development activities included teacher coach training sessions by Franklin staff on each of the devices given to students on a home-loan basis. Teacher coaches attended a variety of training sessions, with two coaches stating that they attended only one session, two coaches saying they attended two sessions, and two coaches saying that they had attended four sessions. Teacher coaches were trained to provide instructional and technical assistance to student/parent teams. The Franklin representative was available for consultation whenever necessary.

III. **OUTCOMES**

Most of the outcome objectives for the 1992-93 were met or exceeded, as noted below:

- The number of students served during the program year (317 students) exceeded the target population of 123 students.
- All the served students received direct academic support through the use of the Franklin or NYNEX devices, and/or enrichment through one of the three drama programs through Arts in Education.
- 95 percent of the participating students showed an increase of one grade level in the Brigance pre- and posttest.
- Every student/parent learning team was assigned to a teacher coach, who maintained logs of his/her contact with the teams, and provided continuous instructional and technical support.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The federally funded P.L. 100.297 program served 317 students during the 1992-93 program year. OREA found that the program was fully implemented as planned and was successful in meeting or exceeding most of the implementation and outcome objectives. The program fell slightly short of its goals on the pre/post test Brigance scores.

Staff training on the devices and on how to support the parent/student teams was appropriate. Teacher coaches successfully served their very large parent/student quotas efficiently.

Based on the findings of the evaluation, OREA recommends that program administrators:

- make Franklin device training more accessible to students through additional after-school training sessions for the students and additional workshops for the student/parent teams;
- expand the Arts in Education program to serve more students with histories and needs similar to those of the target population, as time and finances permit, and
- hire additional teacher coaches to permit more frequent communications with student/parent teams, as well as an expansion of the served population.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

1992-93 ENACT PROGRAM

EVALUATION SUMMARY OF THE ENACT COMPONENT
OF THE HS PL 100.297 (formerly PL 89-313) PROGRAM

- The ENACT program was fully implemented at two sites beginning in the fall of 1992, and continuing through the academic year to May of 1993.

- ENACT provided one- to two-week residencies serving approximately 120 special education students at the two sites and ran several teacher training sessions and one parent workshop. ENACT also served a total of 30 special education high school students during a 14-week residency (consisting of daily sessions of two periods each), and culminating in a performance by students.

- ENACT was evaluated positively by participating teachers, administrators, parents, and by program evaluators/observers.

As part of the 100.297 program, The Division of High Schools Special Education Operations office implemented the ENACT program in two Manhattan high schools during the 1992-93 academic year. The ENACT program provided conflict resolution training activities to build self-esteem. The ENACT program employed two professional actors in each of the high schools to provide dramatic training to the students. Initially, approximately 120 Special Education high school students and approximately 10 teachers at Julia Richman High School and the High School of the Humanities were served in one- or two-week sessions.

Many students selected for program involvement opted to continue with ENACT after the initial fall sessions. Based on student responses to questions on appropriate behavior in specific hypothetical situations thirty students (approximately one-half of the applicants) were accepted for a long-term residency (fourteen weeks). In addition to conflict resolution training, the long-term program provided students with an opportunity to express personal feelings through writing and acting. The culminating activity included the writing and performing of a show based on the students' personal experiences. English credit was offered to those students.

Teacher training and parent workshops were also provided to help support the program. Unfortunately, the parent workshops were not well attended.

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of the ENACT program consisted of three parts: 1) observations of class sessions, a teacher training session, and a parent workshop; 2) interviews with the ENACT Director, Program manager, the actors, a parent workshop attendee, one teacher at each site, an administrator from the NYC Board of Education who is involved with the program, and assistant principals at both sites; and 3) observation of the culminating activity of the long-term component, a play written and performed by the students from both sites.

OREA found that all those interviewed viewed the ENACT program as a positive addition to the students' lives. Comments included: "They (ENACT) employ a melange of listening and verbal activities. Nothing but learning and participating goes on in their classrooms," "...it is an excellent vehicle to foster communication," "He's (the student) very enthusiastic about the class. It's helping him to study better," and "Attendance is marvelous, above 90%, some days 100%".

OREA observers' reactions were also positive. Observers gave both classroom observations a "very effective" rating, (a score of 5 on a Likert Scale of 1 to 5). The observed teacher training session was also evaluated positively by the evaluators, and was well received by the participating teachers.

The final play was observed by an OREA evaluator, and was evaluated as being a very positive experience. Students enthusiastically displayed their writing and acting talents in front of an audience, and welcomed the opportunity to respond to questions from the audience at the end of the presentation.

Two aspects of the program need to be reviewed: 1) a long-term residency could not be made available to all those students who were qualified to participate, and 2) the program was not fully implemented until February at both sites--with a late May conclusion. A full month of English classes in June took place without ENACT involvement.

OREA recommends that program administrators:

- expand the ENACT drama program to include more students;
- expand the ENACT drama program to additional high schools;
- arrange for ENACT to begin the long-term (14 weeks) residency in the fall and continue through the end of the school term in June; and
- develop new methods of increasing parental involvement in the program from the beginning of the school year.